

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-01 VO-03 SCA-01 AID-05

ITF-05 IO-10 SAM-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /090 W

----- 035902

R 151230Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7960

INFO AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BLANTYRE 0579

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MI, CH, TW, MZ

SUBJ: PRES BANDA'S INTEREST IN US/ASIAN POLICY AND IN
MOZAMBIQUE DEVELOPMENTS

REF: BLANTYRE 576 (NOTAL)

1. AFTER DISCUSSING THE QUESTION OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE REFUGEES (REFTEL BLANTYRE 576), PRES BANDA ASKED ME IF I WOULD COMMENT ON CURRENT U.S. POLICY WITH REGARD TO SOUTH KOREA, TAIWAN, THAILAND AND HANOI. I TOLD HIM THAT NOTHING IN CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD LEAD ANYONE TO THINK THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL BACK AWAY FROM ITS COMMITMENTS IN SOUTH KOREA; WITH REGARD TO TAIWAN I INDICATED THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE U.S. POSITION WHICH I HAD REPORTED TO HIM SIX MONTHS AGAO; WITH REGARD TO THAILAND I SAID WE WERE UNDOUBTEDLY MAKING SOME REASSESSMENT OF THE NEED FOR OUR COMMITMENT OF TROOPS IN THAT AREA BUT I WAS CONFIDENT WE WOULD RETAIN OUR CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE THAI GOVERNMENT; WITH REGARD TO HANOI I TOLD HIM AS FAR AS I KNOW WE HAVE HAD NOT CONTACT AS YET WITH THE NEW REGIME AND THAT SECY KISSINGER HAS INDICATED WE WILL HAVE TO WAIT TO SEE HOW THINGS DEVELOP THERE. THESE SEEM TO HAVE BEEN THE ANSWERS BANDA
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HAD EXPECTED AND APPARENTLY WANTED. HE STRESSED ONCE AGAIN THAT

HE HAS NOT BEEN GUIDED IN THE PAST BY THE OAU POSITIONS TOWARD VARIOUS COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD AND CITED MALAWI'S RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND TAIWAN AS EXAMPLES. HE WENT ON TO OBSERVE THAT HE UNDERSTANDS SEVERAL OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES NOW WISH THEY HAD NOT BROKEN RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. HE REMARKED THAT HE EXPECTS RED CHINA TO HAVE A LARGE MISSION IN LOURENCO MARQUES AND WONDERED ALOUD AS TO HOW IT MIGHT REACT TO THE CONTINUED TAIWANESE PRESENCE IN MALAWI. HE GAVE MODEST PRAISE TO THE PRESENT CHINESE MISSION AND ITS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BUT IT SEEMED TO ME IN A MORE RESTRAINED WAY THAN IN THE PAST. HE SAID THAT FROM THE LOCAL FRELIMO REPRESENTATIVE, OLYMPIO VAS, HE HAD LEARNED THAT MACHEL, WHEN HE TALKED WITH CHOU EN LAI IN PEKING RECENTLY, HAD BEEN ASKED BY THE LATTER AS TO THE STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN MOZAMBIQUE AND MALAWI. VAS TOLD BANDA MACHEL HAD TOLD CHOU THAT RELATIONS ARE SATISFACTORY.

2. I ASKED HIM IF MALAWI HAD BEEN INVITED TO SEND A DELEGATION TO LOURENCO MARQUES ON JUNE 25TH. HE SAID NO, BUT THAT THE GOM HAS BEEN INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN A TRADE FAIR THERE NEXT AUGUST AND THE DELEGATION HE SENT TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH FRELIMO WAS WELL RECEIVED. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION REGARDING NACALA, BANDA DECLARED CONTINUED ACCESS TO NACALA AND BEIRA ARE VITAL TO MALAWI; THAT MALAWI REALLY BUILT NACALA AND MALAWIAN AND ZAMBIAN TRAFFIC ARE ITS MAINSTAYS. HE THOUGHT FRELIMO WOULD WEIGH THIS CAREFULLY BUT ADMITTED HE IS NOT CERTAIN IT WILL DO SO. HE HAS HAD NO CONTACT WITH TOP FRELIMO OFFICIALS BUT THINKS SOME OF THEM ARE REASONABLE MEN, E.G. CHISSANO, BUT HE IS LESS SURE OF THE SENSIBILITY OF OTHERS. HE OBSERVED, "YOU KNOW WE ARE NEARLY SURROUNDED BY MOZAMBIQUE AND ALONG OUR BORDERS WE HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH LOCAL FRELIMO OFFICIALS. FOR EXAMPLE, WE RETURN THEIR FUGITIVES FROM JUSTICE AND THEY DO THE SAME FOR US." HE CONCLUDED OUR CONVERSATION WITH THE REMARK HE IS NOT ENTIRELY CONVINCED THAT FRELIMO WILL BE AS SOLIDLY IN CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY AFTER JUNE 25 AS IT THINKS.

3. COMMENT: I SENSED IN BANDA'S QUESTIONING ABOUT ASIA HIS CONTINUING CONCERN ABOUT INCREASING RED CHINESE PRESENCE IN AFRICA AND LITERALLY ON ALL SIDES OF MALAWI ONCE MOZAMBIQUE IS FULLY INDEPENDENT. IF THE TAIWANESE PRESENCE HERE SHOULD IN THE FUTURE BECOME A SERIOUS BOTTLENECK OR IRRITANT IN DEVELOPING

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GOM RELATIONS WITH THE FRELIMO GOVERNMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE, I WOULD ESTIMATE THAT PRESIDENT BANDA WOULD, RELUCTANTLY, SEVER RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN. CONCERNING MOZAMBIQUE BANDA, CONTRARY TO HIS PUBLIC POSTURE OF COMPLETE SERENITY AND CONFIDENCE AS TO FUTURE RELATIONS, IS CONCERNED AND UNEXPECTEDLY REALISTIC BOTH AS TO THE UNCERTAINTIES AHEAD AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR OUTCOME TO MALAWI'S FUTURE.

STEVENSON

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